

Pine County WATERS

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ATVs are topic at annual meeting

*Can I ride 4-wheelers in the ditches?
Can I ride on the shoulder of the roads?
Are there any trails in Pine County?
What authority does the DNR have when
it comes to 4-wheeling? What about rid-
ing in wetlands? What is the law for
underage drivers?*

These are some very typical questions asked by people who are pro-4-wheeling, or by people who are against 4-wheeling in the county. Come and find out what is and isn't legal; come get your questions answered. Find out the basic regulations and what the new laws are.

Pine County Soil & Water Conservation District will be holding an informational meeting on Saturday, April 8th at 9:00 a.m. in Tobies Big Kettle Room. The topic for this meeting will be ATV/OHV use in Pine County. Local DNR officials and the Pine County Sheriff will be on hand to explain and discuss the regulations, and to answer any questions or concerns you may have regarding ATV/OHV usage in the county. A light brunch will follow the workshop, along with a short update on the activities of the Soil & Water Conservation District.

While there is no cost for the workshop, we do ask that people PRE-REGISTER so we can have enough brochures, information and food on hand.

For questions or registration, contact Jill Carlier or Mary Kay Anderson at (320) 384-7431.



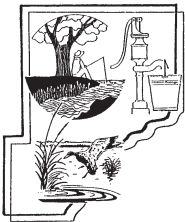
There will be an informational meeting on ATV/OHV use in Pine County Saturday, April 8, at 9 a.m. in Tobies Big Kettle Room .

Pine County Soil and Water Conservation District
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Hinckley, MN 55037

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Pine County Soil and Water Conservation District

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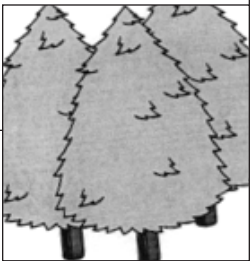
Please send me further clarification, copies of studies or reports for the following articles:

Questions or comments about the Pine County Waters newsletter:

Please send inquiries to:
Editor, Pine County Waters
260 Morris Ave. N
Hinckley, MN 55037

Editor's Column

By Mary Kay Anderson, District Manager



With the warmer than normal temperatures in January that we are experiencing, we hope you are already thinking about spring! Why, because we are ever so excited about our new tree order form. Jill Carlier has developed a spectacular form this year! She spent numerous hours developing a complete and thorough description chart for the back of the form. It lists tree species, soil types, growth rate, wildlife food supply, disease resistance, and life span just to name a few. The new form also has tax included in the price, so there is no need to add sales tax. We've taken care of that for you.

Something new on our order form this year is a Butterfly Garden Seed Mixture. You can use this mixture to plant in a rain garden, on top of your septic mound, or even down by your shoreline. It is a 2 oz. mix which covers approximately 75 – 150 sq. ft.

We have a lot of other exciting events planned this year as well. One of our "hot topics" this year to be discussed at our annual meeting on Saturday, April 8th is ATV use. We get a lot of questions about ATV use on roads, ditches, trails, and of course, wetlands. We are going to have a panel of DNR officials and the Pine County Sheriff available for a question and answer session. You will be able to write your questions on a piece of paper and staff will read them aloud to the panel. Any

member, or members, of the panel will then respond to each question. Refreshments are provided, but pre-registration is required in order for us to have enough hand-outs and food available.

We are also planning another free nitrate testing clinic on Thursday, June 15th at two locations in Pine County for those of you who missed last year's event or just want to have your water tested again. Testing will be at the Rutledge Community Center from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. and at the Hinckley City Hall Community Room from 2 p.m. – 5 p.m.

And finally, what I would like to mention is the Impaired Waters List that MPCA sent out in December. There is an article in this issue that talks about what contaminants have been identified in the state, and a sub-article pertaining to certain waters in Pine County. Please be sure to check that out, as well as the MPCA's impaired waters website which is also listed in the article.

Once again, our staff has done a great job this year! There are lots of articles in this issue to educate and inform you about numerous conservation practices and projects. We hope you enjoy this issue of the "Pine County Waters."



Free Water Testing for Nitrates in June

By Mary Kay Anderson, District Manager

Pine SWCD and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture will be conducting two free nitrate testing clinics in Pine County on Thursday, June 15th. Water samples may be brought to the:

Rutledge Community Center
9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
or
Hinckley City Hall Community Room
2 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Samples are analyzed within a few minutes and the results are given directly to the landowner. Informational brochures on drinking water will also be available.

Below are instructions for taking the sample:
Run the water for 3 minutes before taking the sample.
Use a permanent marker to label any type of plastic baggie or Ziplock™ bag with your name. If you want to remain anonymous, label the bag with a number or a code you will easily remember. A clean glass jar can also be used if a plastic bag is not available. If you have more than one sample, add an identifier.

Example:

Joe Swenson, Home Well
Joe Swenson, Barn Well #2

Collect the water in a baggie or

jar, only a half cup is needed. Do this within 24 hours of arriving at the water testing clinic, and keep it refrigerated until you leave for the clinic. The water sample should be cool upon arrival.

If you have water treatment equipment installed (other than a softener), we recommend taking a sample "before" and "after" to determine if your system is working properly.

We encourage everyone to take advantage of this free test. Nitrates have no color, taste or smell. Boiling your water does not get rid of nitrates, it only concentrates them. High nitrates pose a risk to infants by reducing the amount of oxygen carried by the baby's blood, known as "blue baby syndrome." If your family is expecting a baby, or have infants visit your home, you should know what the nitrate levels are in your drinking water.

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) has guidelines for pollutants in private wells. The health-based limit for nitrates is 10 parts per million (ppm).

If you have any questions about the clinic, you may contact me at the Pine SWCD office at 320-384-7431.

Water Management Plan Task Force Meeting Set for February

Volunteers welcome!

Pine County Soil & Water Conservation District administers the Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan for Pine County. A task force consisting of volunteer landowners and local governmental agencies is in place to advise us as to what issues and concerns should be addressed in the county, and in what priority.

The next water management plan task force meeting has

been set for Thursday, February 23rd at 7:00 p.m. at the Hinckley City Hall Community Room. We meet once or twice a year to discuss upcoming work activities, projects, and concerns. If you're interested in the protection of Pine County's water resources, please consider attending this meeting.

The public is welcome to attend. Refreshments will be provided.

Upcoming Events...

February 23 – Water Management Plan Task Force Meeting – Hinckley City Hall Community Room from 7 – 9 p.m. The public is invited to attend to discuss concerns and set priorities. Refreshments are provided.

March 23 – Stream Monitor Workshop – Public Service Building, Mora from 7 – 9 p.m. This workshop is for current stream monitors and for anyone who is interested in becoming a stream monitor. Contact Sam Martin at the SWCD office at 320-384-7431 if interested.

April 8 – SWCD Annual Meeting & ATV Panel Discussion – Tobies Restaurant, Hinckley from 9 – 12 noon. You are invited to attend our annual meeting. This year's featured topic is on ATV use. We will have a panel discussion with DNR officials and the Pine County Sheriff. It will be a question and answer session in a friendly environment. Pine SWCD, along with other agencies, will have brochures and publications available and will also give brief summaries about past, present, and future highlights. There will be a light brunch, so PRE-REGISTRATION is required. Please call the SWCD office to register at 320-384-7431.

April 25 – Deadline for 2006 Tree & Shrub Orders! Be sure to get your order in early. Don't wait until April, as we tend to start running out of certain species as early as the end of February. Check out our website at www.pineswcd.org for the most current listing of available stock.

May – Soil Survey, First Acre Ceremony – Some time the beginning of May, a First Acre Ceremony will take place, officially "kicking off" the soil survey for Pine County.

May 1 – Area III Envirothon – Cloquet Forestry Center – This is an outdoor environmental competition of high school students grades 9 – 12. Please contact us for more information or to see our video.

May 2 – Homeowner Septic System Care Workshop – A 2-hour program for homeowners will be held in Pine City, at City Hall from 7 – 9 p.m.

May 4 – Fresh Water Fair, Pine City Fairgrounds – The Pokegama Lake Association sponsors this county-wide festival for all 5th grade students in Pine

County and they also extend it to a few schools out-side of the county. This is an outdoor and indoor event for over 600 students. Contact Dick Zelenak at 651-738-0563 for more information.

May 4, 5, 6 – Tree & Shrub pick-up (tentative) – Hinckley – We will be sending out information in mid to late April as to the confirmed dates, time and place.

May 6 – Pine County Junk Day – Pine City County Highway Garage – Appliances and scrap metal will be accepted for a nominal charge (\$5 per appliance, \$5 per pick up load of scrap metal).

May 17 – State Envirothon – Lake Bronson – Outdoor environmental competition for high school students grades 9 – 12 that have advanced from seven area envirothons.

May 20 – Pine County Junk Day – Sandstone County Highway Garage – Appliances and scrap metal will be accepted for a nominal charge (\$5 per appliance, \$5 per pick up load of scrap metal).

May 20 – Small Community Wastewater Workshop – YMCA Camp Miller, Sturgeon Lake from 1 – 4 p.m. This workshop will talk about developing plans to solve wastewater issues as a community and manage septic systems. All lake associations and small communities are encouraged to invite 3 – 5 property owners to attend.

June 15 – Free Water Testing Clinics – Rutledge Community Center 9 – 12 noon and Hinckley City Hall Community Room from 2 – 5 p.m. Bring a small jar of water and we will test it for nitrates. It just takes a few minutes, and it's FREE! Contact the SWCD at 320-384-7431 for more information.

July 23 – 29 – National Envirothon – Winnipeg, Manitoba – Outdoor learning competition for high school students grades 9 – 12 that have advanced from 44 states and 9 Canadian Provinces.

August 2 – 6 – Pine County Fair – Fairgrounds, Pine City – Pine SWCD/NRCS have a booth in the Snake River Valley Conservation Building. Be sure to stop by and check out the information available on the various programs we have.

People You Should Know...



Greg Bernu,
Pine County
Land Commissioner

Greg received his Bachelor of Science in Forestry from the University of Minnesota in 1981. He worked a variety of temporary forestry related jobs with the US Forest Service, Minnesota Power and Blandin Paper before being hired as the Pine County Forester in 1987. In 1990, Greg was hired by Lake County as a Forester, then in 1995 by Potlatch Corporation in Cloquet. After the sale of the pulp and paper mill to Sappi in 2003, he went back to the Forest Service in Tofte, MN as the Assistant Ranger for Timber Management. Greg accepted the offer of Pine County Land Commissioner in June of 2005.

Greg's concern for the environment is hoping that we can continue to manage our natural resources for the common good of all people based on the application of sound science. This will yield continual forest products and goods, clean air and water and abundant recreational opportunities for all. He believes that if we maintain a healthy forest by proper management activities, we will maintain a healthy life style.

Greg can be reached by calling the Pine County Land Department at 320-245-6703, by writing 1610 Hwy. 23 North, Sandstone, MN 55072, or by email: gjbernu@co.pine.mn.us



Jennifer Mold,
NRCS WAE Employee

Jennifer was hired on as a NRCS WAE employee in October. The WAE Program is a temporary program to provide technical assistance. Jennifer is currently a senior at the University of Minnesota, St. Paul campus studying Environmental Science with an emphasis in soil science. She grew up on a dairy farm in Rush City which is now a crop farm with a few steers. Jennifer's concerns are with resource conservation and management, with particular interest in the role soil has in the ecosystem. She is also interested in soil mapping and morphology.

Jennifer enjoys the Minnesota outdoors, fishing, camping, hiking, agate hunting, and recently cross-country skiing. She hopes to obtain a career as a soil scientist or a soil conservation technician within the Natural Resource Conservation Service. Jennifer can be contacted by writing NRCS at 260 Morris Ave No, Hinckley MN 55037, by calling 320-384-7432, or by email jennifer.mold@mn.usda.gov



Lorelei Swenson,
Pine County 4-H
Program Coordinator

It was with great pleasure that Lorelei accepted the Pine County 4-H Program Coordinator position in mid-October. Growing up, she was an active member in Pine County 4-H. In 2002, Lorelei graduated from Concordia University with a degree in Secondary Social Studies Education. Previous to starting this position she was employed by Talent Software Services working as an IT Support Consultant and since 1998 she has worked for the Minnesota Historical Society at the Northwest Company Fur Post.

Lorelei is proud to be back in Pine County working with 4-H. She believes that a significant difference is made in the community when youth are involved in 4-H. Lorelei is also very excited to enrich the community by working with 4-H in Pine County.

Growing up on a farm has taught Lorelei the importance of being a good steward of the land. It also gave her a love for spending time outdoors. Lorelei feels that it is vital to preserve land for recreation.

Lorelei can be contacted at the Pine County 4-H Program, located at Pine Technical College, Pine City, by calling (320) 629-4545 or by email at swens451@umn.edu



Lonnie Thomas,
Department of Natural
Resources (DNR) Division
of Waters Area Hydrologist

Lonnie has been employed by DNR Division of Waters since 1976. Until moving to Brainerd in 1985, various program responsibilities included public waters inventory, water appropriation permit administration, and statewide environmental review.

Since 1993, Lonnie has been the Aitkin Area Hydrologist. The DNR Division of Waters recently adjusted area boundaries. Pine County is now administered by Lonnie. He is responsible for Aitkin and Pine counties.

The Area Hydrologist is responsible for administration of the public waters and appropriation of waters permit programs. Other responsibilities include support to local governmental agencies for floodplain and shoreland management, data collection for groundwater, stream flows and lake level monitoring, and technical services.

Issues in Pine County reflect closeness to and access from the Metro Area, abundance of streams, and the potential for multiple regulatory jurisdictions over individual projects. Key to the future of water resources management is providing information and understanding that "you manage people's expectations for the water resources natural capabilities vs. manipulating the resource to meet the development wishes." Long-term health of the water resources is dependent on minimizing impacts while providing for reasonable use.

Lonnie can be reached at the DNR Division of Waters by writing 1601 Minnesota Drive, Brainerd, MN 56401, by calling 218/833-8689 or by email at lonnie.thomas@dnr.state.mn.us